

March 10, 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

I am a 9<sup>th</sup> grader and a life-long animal lover. I live in Newtown with my family and our rescue pets. I am a local animal sanctuary youth board member and a national youth council representative for Farm Sanctuary. Thank you for raising House Bill 5293.

I believe animals fuel the best parts of ourselves. Except when they are used in traveling performances. Traveling shows featuring wild animals bring out cruelty and inhumanity. Children are told this is entertainment and for our learning. Those are lies. This is abuse.

Wild and exotic animals in traveling shows are often ripped from their parents soon after birth. They have miserable lives. They spend most of their lives in cages or in windowless trailers. There is no room to allow climbing, swimming, or running. Investigations have revealed elephants shut in trailers for 19 hours a day for a short trip. Animals are forced to perform scary, painful tricks day after day. Their bodies get stressed from unnatural movements. Animals don't voluntarily perform in shows but they are just afraid of the consequences if they don't. This part of the show doesn't seem entertaining.

Due to lack of exercise and limits on natural behavior, these animals are at risk for health and behavior problems. No traveling operation can meet their most basic needs. In the wild, elephants walk up to 30 miles a day. Most parking lots don't have that much open space.

Audiences are unaware that stunts are possible through hooks and shock devices. And ticket holders don't know about an animal's escape risk. But children know tigers don't run through rings of fire in the wild. We know there's no real education in these acts. We will just watch cruelty.

Forcing scared wild animals close to humans creates public safety risks. Animals in shows have injured and killed humans. The stress from bright lights and the noises can increase danger. There is data showing that deaths and injuries are becoming more common in these events. Even skilled trainers can get hurt.

Similar Bills have been proposed in Connecticut seven times. It's time for honesty and time to really support justice for all. No tiger should be shocked to perform. No lion should lie in chains. And no child should be put in harm's way.

Thank you and please contact me if you would like to talk about helping animals.

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Sources:

Born Free USA ([www.bornfreeusa.org](http://www.bornfreeusa.org))

Animal Defenders International ([www.ad-international.org](http://www.ad-international.org))

Animal Legal Defense Fund ([www.aldf.org](http://www.aldf.org))